DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 479 890 SO 035 356

AUTHOR	Hamot, Gregory E.
TITLE	Civic Education Trends in Post-Communist Countries of Central and Eastern Europe. ERIC Digest.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, Bloomington, IN.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	EDO-SO-2003-11
PUB DATE	2003-11-00
NOTE	4p.
CONTRACT	ED-99-CO-0016
AVAILABLE FROM	ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 2805 East Tenth Street, Suite 120, Bloomington, IN 47408. Tel: 800-266-3815 (Toll Free); Fax: 812-855-0455; e-mail: ericso@indiana.edu; Web site: http://ericso.indiana.edu.
PUB TYPE	ERIC Publications (071) -- ERIC Digests in Full Text (073)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Citizen Participation; *Citizenship Education; Communism; Cooperation; *Democracy; *Educational Trends
IDENTIFIERS	Conceptual Frameworks; ERIC Digests; Europe (Central); Europe (East)

ABSTRACT

Developments during the decade and a half following the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe indicate broad advancement in civic education for democracy. This digest notes the rising trend in civic education competency in Central and Eastern Europe, describes an increasingly accepted and used framework for civic education, and illustrates this broad advancement through three significant trends in collaborative projects that contribute to civic education in Central and Eastern Europe. Lists 2 Internet resources and 11 references. (BT)

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Gregory E. Hamot

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EDO-SO-2003-11 November 2003

Civic Education Trends in Post-Communist Countries of Central and Eastern Europe

By Gregory E. Hamot

Developments during the decade-and-a-half following the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe indicate broad advancement in civic education for democracy. This Digest notes the rising trend in civic education competency in Central and Eastern Europe, describes an increasingly accepted and used framework for civic education, and illustrates this broad advancement through three significant trends in collaborative projects that contribute to civic education in Central and Eastern Europe.

A Trend Toward Civic Competency. The recent International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) study of civic knowledge in 28 countries reveals some startling conclusions. According to national results, the most successful programs for democratic citizenship education exist in Poland, the United States, and the Czech Republic (Torney-Purta et al. 2001). Given this finding, one may conclude that collaborative efforts conducted with western democracies, particularly the United States, contributed on some level to the abilities of teachers and students in Poland, the Czech Republic, and many other countries where such collaborations exist, to achieve the highest levels of civic competence.

Trend Toward a Common Education for Democratic Citizenship. John Patrick, through myriad experiences with projects in Central and Eastern Europe and his lifelong study of the teaching and learning of democratic citizenship in the U.S., has developed a civic education framework (Patrick 2003). This framework appeals so widely to civic education reformers that the American Council for International Education requires that all civic education programs funded by their international Partners in Education program include a balanced assortment of themes from this framework.

At the heart of Patrick's framework lie four key components of a common democratic citizenship education and an elaboration on democracy's core concepts (2003). First, the four key components include civic knowledge, cognitive civic skills, participatory civic skills, and civic dispositions.

Second, Patrick's global framework requires that all democratic citizens understand six core concepts in order to function most effectively in their respective societies. These indispensable concepts include representative democracy, constitutionalism (rule of law), rights within the parameters of liberalism, citizenship, civil society based on a free and open social system, and the market economy of a free and open economic system (Patrick 2003, 26).

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Three Trends in Civic Education Development Programs. Many collaborations between U.S. institutions and educators in Central and Eastern Europe implement Patrick's framework to produce three distinct trends in civic education projects. Various combinations of these trends can be found in each of the exemplary projects described here. These trends include (1) original curriculum development for use in pre-adult education, (2) university preservice teacher education, and (3) adaptation of existing curricula.

Trend 1. *Original curriculum development for use in pre-adult education.* Projects conducted by The Ohio State University in collaboration with educators in Poland and Ukraine have worked to establish new curricula for civic education that include all of Patrick's four key components of a common education for democratic citizenship (Craddock 2003). Additionally, The University of Iowa College of Education has collaborated with educational reformers in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Armenia to achieve a bottom-up unfolding of new curricula that meet the needs of local populations (Hamot 2003; Hlebowitsh and Hamot 1999). In each of these projects, the post-communist educators completed residencies at their host U.S. institutions to explore curriculum ideas that fit their national contexts. The core element of this trend in civic education reform is the curriculum seminar that meets throughout the residencies. This seminar forms the foundation for developing ideas and writing instructional materials that can be used with pre-adult students in specific post-communist environments (Remy 1996). Among the more popular trends in democratic teaching methods--methods that enliven Patrick's framework--emerging from these projects are Socratic seminars, role playing and simulations, historical document analysis, and service learning.

Trend 2: *University preservice teacher education.* Many partnerships between U.S. and Central and Eastern European educators indicate a trend toward developing courses or complete certification programs in civic education. A project between Boston University and Russell Sage College and teacher education institutions in Samara, Russia and a project between Indiana University and Vilnius Pedagogical University in Lithuania exemplify this trend. Both projects stem from Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program, conducted by the Center for Civic Education.

In the case of Russia, scholars and teacher educators from the U.S. work with teacher educators in Samara to develop a preservice teacher education program and textbooks in civic education. Eventually, this project will lead to the first group of teachers certified in civic education. Known as the University Reform Initiative, this project required extracurricular civics activities, a notion shunned since the staged projects of Soviet times (White 2003) and now a trend in teacher education for citizenship.

The Indiana University initiative with Lithuania follows the trend toward interdisciplinary preservice teacher education.

Gregory E. Hamot is an Associate Professor of Education at The University of Iowa.

This project is developing a curriculum that fuses social work with civic education. The Vilnius Pedagogical University's master's degree program in social education will produce teachers who not only act as advocates for child welfare, but also seek to assist students in analyzing social problems within a developing democracy. In so doing, graduates of this program will focus on the intersection of civic education and school social work in the areas of Patrick's framework that include morality, ethics, rights and responsibilities, empathy, and positive socialization (Kvieskiene and Mason, in press).

Trend 3: *Adaptation of existing curricula.* Given the speed with which Central and Eastern Europe must democratize, many of the projects emanating from U.S. partnerships include the adaptation of existing civic education curricula. Most prominent among those adaptations is the Center for Civic Education's *Project Citizen* (1996). This curriculum typifies the trend in post-communist civic education to re-involve citizens in their political lives and futures as members of a democracy. *Project Citizen* prescribes a format for students to investigate a public issue and develop a reasoned policy that will address the issue. Suitable to all democracies, *Project Citizen* is an example of the trend to adapt existing U.S. materials that meet the needs of individual post-communist educational contexts. Research conducted by Vontz, Metcalf, and Patrick (2000) on *Project Citizen* in Latvia and Lithuania indicates that this approach is successful when indigenous educational reformers collaborate with U.S. partners in teacher education programs and schools throughout post-communist Central and Eastern Europe.

Internet Resources. The following Web sites contain resources and information on trends in post-communist civic education.

Civnet <http://www.civnet.org>, the Civitas International Web site, describes the many programs conducted by the Center for Civic Education under its Civitas: An International Civic Education Exchange Program. Additionally, this site houses John Patrick's most recent iteration of his global framework for civic education in a democracy developed in June 2003.

The Partners in Education (PiE) Program of the American Councils for International Education <http://www.americancouncils.org/program.asp?PageID=83&ProgramID=10> brings together post-communist educators with U.S. institutions to learn about citizenship education and to observe and contribute to academic life at the host institutions. Participants are expected to provide a training conference in civics curriculum development and evaluation upon their return home.

References and ERIC Resources. The following list of resources includes references used to prepare this Digest. The items followed by an ED number are available in microfiche, paper, or electronic full text from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). For information about prices, contact EDRS, 7420 Fullerton Road, Suite 110, Springfield, Virginia, 22153 2852; World Wide Web <edrs.com>; telephone numbers are (703) 440 1400 and (800) 443 3742. Entries followed by an EJ number, annotated monthly in CURRENT INDEX TO JOURNALS IN EDUCATION (CIJE), are not available through EDRS. However, they can be located in the journal section of most larger libraries by using the bibliographic information provided, requested through Interlibrary Loan, or ordered from commercial reprint services.

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This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-99-CO-0016. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. ERIC Digests are in the public domain and may be freely reproduced and disseminated.

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